

Annapolis Conservancy Board

Thursday, September 10, 2009, 5:30pm

City Council Chambers

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Jay Baldwin, **Chair**

Tom Lippert, **Vice Chair**

Karen Jennings

Gretchen Clift

Joel Dunn

Jon Chapman

Members Absent:

David Fogle

Staff Present:

Steve Carr Tami Hook, Recorder

Guest Present:

Rebekah Howey, Maryland Environmental Trust

HOUSEKEEPING:

July 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Dunn moved approval of the July 9, 2009 meeting minutes as written. Ms. Clift seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a vote of 4-0.

Review Minutes & Activities of Other City Boards

The minutes of other City Boards and Commissions were provided for review. Members were encouraged to submit any questions or concerns to staff.

Appointment Dates

Staff has been trying to get clarification from Mr. Clark on the appointment dates of several of the Board's members and to date has been unsuccessful. He will get this information and report at the next meeting.

Mail

Staff provided the mail to the Chairman.

NEW BUSINESS:

MET "The Challenges & Opportunities for Urban & Volunteer Land Trusts"

Staff provided an invitation to each of the Board members to the MET's Baltimore Green Space and the Homestead Harvest Community Garden "The Challenges and Opportunities for Urban and Volunteer Land Trust" forum scheduled for Saturday, September 12, 2009 at 9:30-2:30pm.

Ms. Jennings and Ms. Clift both volunteered to attend on behalf of the Board.

Rebekah Howey – Maryland Environmental Trust

Staff noted that the Board received updated versions of the documents listed below. He invited Ms. Howey to discuss the changes outlined in each of the documents.

A. Review of MET's Model Standard Deed of Conservation Easement

Ms. Howey explained that this model is primarily aimed at jointly held co-owned easements and since the Annapolis Conservancy Board's (ACB) projects are do not fall into this category, this will be primarily an informational document. Mr. Carr provided a copy of the MET's new model Standard Deeds of Conservation Easement and the ACB's Standard Deed Conservation Easement (SDCE) for members to review for comparison purposes. He went over the minor changes between the two agreements and then pointed out that in 2008, the ACB allowed the MET attorneys to review our SDCE and offer changes, which were subsequently reviewed by the Annapolis City Attorney and incorporated into an updated document. The City sees no reason to go through this exercise yet again and will continue to use the version adopted in 2008.

B. Review of MET's Model Cooperative Agreement

Staff provided a copy of the original Cooperative Agreement between the City and MET signed in 2002. He also provided a copy of the revised Cooperative Agreement dated June 2009. Ms. Howey went over the changes made to the document since 2002 and how the ACB can tailor this document to their individual needs. Staff agreed to make draft revisions to the agreement with assistance from Ms. Howey. Once the changes are made, the document will be sent out to the Board for review and approval at the November meeting.

Warren's View @ Acton's Landing

Mr. Dunn reported that he frequently visits Warren's View Park and noticed that someone had placed several traffic cones in the upper branches of the large cypress tree. Staff agreed to contact the Department of Public Works regarding this issue. Mr. Dunn also noted that the park has been dredged and the boom has been removed. He asked who is responsible for turning the lights on & off at the park. Staff responded that Recreation and Parks is responsible and will be alerted to the lighting problems. Mr. Dunn also reported that the dog waste receptacle has been removed and needs to be placed more securely in the ground.

Advocacy

Mr. Dunn discussed an advocacy effort by various groups who are working on Capitol Hill in support of full funding for Land and Water Conservation Fund which helps to preserve parks. The fund also goes to community parks, recreational areas, and trails. Mr. Dunn will distribute a letter of support that he hopes the Board will sign. He agreed to provide a copy for the Board's review and consideration via e-mail.

OLD BUSINESS:

Munz Property Easement Ownership

Staff reported that the City does not own the property and the easement is owned by Anne Arundel County. The Board has a written MOU with AACO that allows the ACB to visit the site each year to make sure it has not been damaged in any way.

Easement Acquisition Dates on Website & Map Cue Sheet

Staff reported that the acquisition dates noted on the cue sheet are accurate and match the dates on the website.

"Post Haste" Access Agreement Connecting Poplar & Spa Creek Trails

Staff contacted Mr. Elson who handles all of the conservation easement documents for the Annapolis Office of Law to find out the status of the negotiations between the City and the owner of "Post Haste" who owns the entire property. After review by various City staff, the original proposal was amended to allow the trails to be closed if work on the property is necessary, and added a clause that will require trail access through the property if the building footprint were changed in the future. Staff also pointed out that the City has made a proposal to indemnify the owner in return for permanent access for the trail through the property.

Posting of Signs at Kingsport

Staff toured the property with representatives from the community and noted that this 46-acre easement would be a great park on the scale of Quiet Waters Park. He explained that the City was contacted by the Kingsport Homeowners Association because there were trespassers

riding ATV's or motorcycles through the heavily-wooded easement. He noted that it will be extremely difficult to restrict access because of the multiple entry points. The City was asked by the HOA to post warning signs to help keep the trespassers out of the easement. He noted that the signs have been posted but will be of marginal value. The posting of the signs will, however, make it easier for the Annapolis Police to enforce trespassing.

Kingsport Violations – Enforcement Letter to HOA

Mr. Carr noted that problems encountered during the site visit were encroachment into the 46-acres and dumping of yard waste at the edge of the property. He provided a copy of the draft letter to the HOA President. Board members were encouraged to submit any comments by e-mail within a week.

Draft Letter to Land Trust Alliance

Staff provided a copy of a letter from Mr. Rand Wentworth of the Land Trust Alliance which was sent to the ACB in July 2008, but never received. Staff also provided the Board with a copy of a draft letter to the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) that addresses the points raised by Mr. Wentworth.

Ms. Howey, of the Maryland Environmental Trust, explained that she works closely with the LTA on their recently-modified “Standards and Practices” that were developed as a result of Congressional concerns that land trusts needed to be run in a more ethical and sustainable way. She offered The ACB another alternative to belonging to the LTA, stating that there is a new organization called “Community Network Alliance” located in Boston that focuses on urban land trust issues. There was a brief discussion regarding benefits and drawbacks of belonging to the Land Trust Alliance. Ms. Howey noted that in order to sign on to the MET Model Cooperative Agreement, a land trust has to be a part of the LTA. Several Board members suggested that the tone of the letter drafted by staff should be softened and that the ACB should strive to retain its membership if LTA agreed to involve it more in sharing the ACB model with other groups around the country. Mr. Chapman agreed to draft the letter and send to the Board for review. Mr. Dunn agreed to research the pros and cons of the LTA membership. Staff reminded the Board that a resignation letter has already been sent to LTA and the ACB is no longer a member.

Chester Avenue Clearing

Staff provided an email from a Chester Avenue resident regarding the City maintaining the green space between the fence and the road. He noted that this is an issue that should be handled by the Department of Public Works and does not affect the easement in any way.

Annual Tour Loose Ends

Mr. Carr reported that staff surveyed the following locations during its annual tour:

He also noted that the following locations remain to be surveyed:

- a) Annapolis Ridge – Mr. Dunn and Mr. Carr will survey this easement.
- b) Regatta Bay I and Regatta Bay II – Mr. Dunn and Mr. Carr will survey this easement.
- c) Village Greens – Mr. Lippert will tour this easement.
- d) Riders Glen – Mr. Lippert will tour this easement.
- e) Kingsport – Mr. Chapman, Ms. Clift and Mr. Dunn will tour easement. The tour was tentatively scheduled for September 24, 2009.

Others were invited to attend the tour if their schedule allows.

Spa Cove Update

Staff will continue to work with the Director of the Annapolis Planning & Zoning Department, Mr. Jon Arason, regarding a future access agreement between the owner of the Spa Cove Apartments and the City to allow a trail connection between Eastport and Truxtun Park.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2009 at 5:30pm in City Council Chambers.

With there being no further business, Mr. Lippert moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:01pm.

Mr. Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a vote 6-0.

Tami Hook, Recorder